



# Veggies on Wheels



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NEWSLETTER OF PFENNING'S ORGANIC FOOD BOX

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"Veggies on Wheels" (edited by Wolfgang W.) generally appears around the beginning of every month.

## Dear Pfenning's Food Box Community,

### Spring on the Way!

After going out with a punch, February had to release its stronghold on us and bow to March, which – contrary to the old adage – seems to be coming in like a lamb. Fine by us. We are already experiencing the growing strength of the sun through the fresh greenhouse Spring Mix from Organic Oasis which we have been adding to your Boxes recently when possible. Only about two more weeks and spring will be upon us. Thrilling!



### Fresh Bulk MAPLE SYRUP

With spring also comes **Maple Syrup**. Just last week the upcoming **Maple Syrup season** made the news. Thanks to the mild winter, local producers have apparently already begun tapping their trees. The emphasis was to support **LOCAL** producers – which is precisely what we are doing again this year. As we have been announcing in Almut's weekly **Store News and Specials Newsletter** and in my weekly **Order Reminder**, you can place an order for Maple Syrup with us which we get from an organic farm north of Elmira. Bring your containers to the Store, or Food Box customers,

send them along in your return boxes or Bins with your **name and phone number on each container**. These containers – ideally glass – need to have a proper **watertight seal for liquids** and be **at least a 2 L size or larger** (glass, plastic pail etc.) with a **large spout** (at least 1 inch wide if possible).

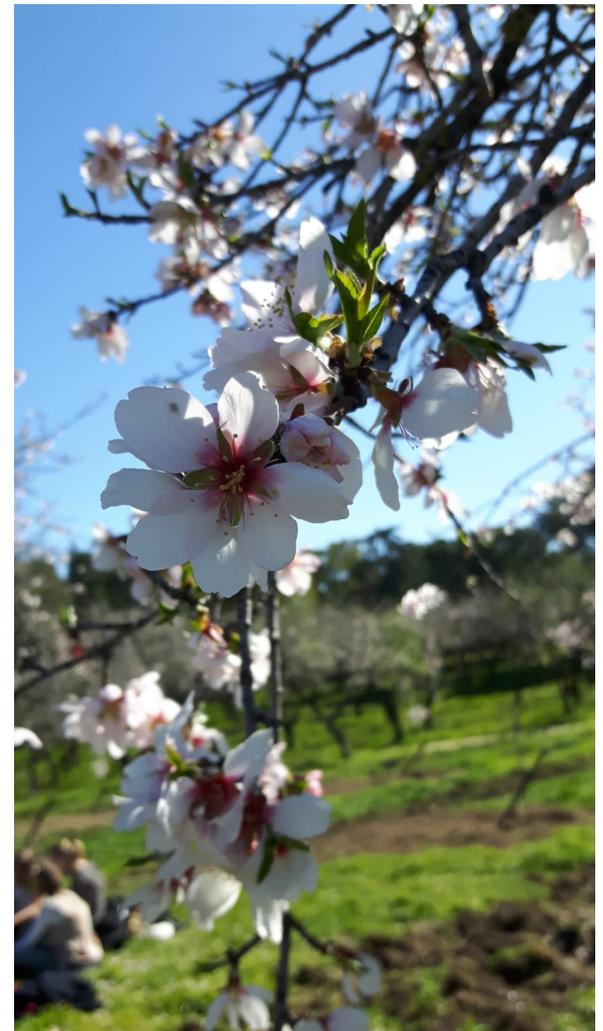
If you are interested in **fresh bulk Maple Syrup**, **CALL 519-725-4282** or email [store@pfenningsorganic.ca](mailto:store@pfenningsorganic.ca) to order!

Prices will be similar to last year - around **\$12 to 13 per liter**.

**Did you know?** You can keep Maple Syrup in your freezer in any container, or boiled and bottled for a stable shelf food item.

### Almonds and Spring

What do **Almonds** and spring have in common? Not much at first sight. However, when Almut recently showed me a picture sent to us by our daughter Barnhild – currently residing in Spain – of the almond trees in bloom over there, the connection became clear. "That's where our organic Almonds come from," was an obvious conclusion. Well, maybe not exactly from that region, which is in the vicinity of Madrid, but definitely from Spain. If you enjoy raw organic Almonds (not steam-treated like Almonds from the U.S.), you will like our organic Almonds from Spain – find them in our Catalogue here: <https://tinyurl.com/rkmzf9v>.





## Breakfast of Champions?

No too long ago, I was charmed by an article lauding the merits of Oatmeal, yes **Oatmeal**. The article (by Wes Judd (which you can read in its entirety here: <https://tinyurl.com/y38vcb3h>) admits that while being old-fashioned, Oatmeal is nutritional “rocket fuel” which is also widely embraced by top athletes. Since I happen to love oatmeal and oats, I was naturally attracted by the topic. Praised as an age-old, yet powerful superfood, the article introduces a row of successful endurance athletes who make Oatmeal and Oats their main nutritional breakfast choice.

Some of the benefits of **Oatmeal** are seen in it being a whole grain, filled with key vitamins and minerals, providing a low-glycemic carb that gradually releases energy and helps fuel recovery after strenuous activity without causing a sugar crash, and is high in fiber to aid the digestive and metabolic systems. Another one of Oatmeal’s great virtues is seen in its capacity to be combined with many other high-quality nutritious ingredients, making it even more wholesome. The article goes ahead to let six top performance athletes – triathletes, ultrarunners, and surfers – present their personal way of preparing their Oats. Very simple, insightful recipes. The **basic recipe** to prepare Oats is to boil a ratio of ½ cup rolled oats to one cup liquid – either water or a milk of your choice – and top it with whatever you need that day (for steel-cut oats, change the ratio to ¼ cup oats to one cup liquid).

Personally, I let my quick oats **soak overnight** in a bowl which is almost like cooking them, but it takes much longer and allows the oats to absorb the liquid and soften them enough to eat them **uncooked**, thus eliminating any nutrient breakdown from heat. Soaking helps the starches break down and reduces the natural phytic acid, which helps your body utilize the oats’ nutrients much more efficiently. To enhance the taste and nutrient content, you can add some maple syrup, nut or seed butters (almond, cashew, pumpkin, sunflower, peanut or sesame), your favourite milk or cream and any further nutrient of your choice. Beats any processed breakfast cereal by leaps and bounds!

Preparing Oatmeal and using Oats in this way is not only healthier and more nourishing, it is also more cost-efficient. Take a moment and go to our **Cereals** department in our online **Catalogue** – <https://www.pfenningsorganic.ca/ecommerce/food/grocery--boxed--canned--packaged-/cereals/hot/> – where you can choose from Oat Bran (great fiber), Quick Oats and Rolled Oat Flakes, all from Quebec, or Gluten-Free Old-Fashioned or Quick-Cooking Rolled Oats (Bob’s Red Mill). Breakfast, here we come!

## Plastic on the Retreat

Nice to see that stores all around are scaling back on the indiscriminate use of **plastic packaging**. Can’t say that they are following our example, but we actually have been doing this for years. How are you, notably our **Food Box customers**, experiencing our no- (or less-) plastic approach? Freshness of produce is paramount, so in some cases, you will still see the use of plastic bags (for example with our local Spring Mix or Baby Spinach) and we are hard-pressed to do without them in these specific cases. As you know, we DO offer the possibility of you providing us with your own mesh or cloth “carebags” (labelled with YOUR name) and will go the extra mile to use these for your sensitive produce items. We did notice that the carebags we offer in the Store (in our HOME department under Bags Multipurpose - Reusable) and which some of you are already giving us are good but not ideal for leafy greens and bunched veggies. Some customers have been providing us with bigger bags made from cloth or tightly-woven nylon which can hold most if not all the frail leafy greens and veggies in a given Basket. If you do a search for “nylon reusable shopping bags,” you can find lots of different varieties. Truly, it remains a work in progress.

**Wishing you all a merry month of March and a terrific jump into spring,**

**Wolfgang**